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Early English Choral Music.  
Birmingham 1890

The period I have taken it upon me to talk to you about is no doubt a long way off, & possibly it needs a comprehensive mind to be thoroughly in sympathy with it. But it appears to me to be the one time & kind of art of which English musicians may think with most complete complacency; & it is the time & comprises the style & group of artistic works which show our national Musical characteristics more favourably & more clearly & unmixed with foreign effusions than any other. ~~The study of the science of Sociology seems to unfold to us that National types are extraordinarily persistent. There is a brilliant saying of Caesar's~~ And I think the characteristics displayed in it are still typical of whatever is characteristic in our Modern Art; notwithstanding the flight of centuries. There is a brilliant passage of Caesars that shows us that the Gauls of his time were exactly the same in some salient particulars as the French are now; there are passages in the works of that genial [?] & most intelligent writer Giraldus Cambrensis in his description from personal experience of our first meddling with Ireland under the direction of Strongbow & his family which show that many salient features of the Irish character were the same then as now.

Persistence of national types

Quality & Character of Music a piece with character  
of its originators



And if any of you happen to have read the ancient Russian legends of Ilia of Murôn, & the cycle of Vladimir you might observe that the prominent points of Russian character therein portrayed agree quite clearly with the characters ~~the~~ which are presented to us in the modern works of Gogol, Tolstoi, & Dostoievsky. And I think it is much the same with ourselves. When we read Chaucer or other intimate studies of National life of some ~~five or six~~ four or five hundred years ago we find ourselves wonderfully in sympathy with their ways of taking ~~things~~ life, the particular kind of jokes they enjoy, and ~~their~~ the general average of their dispositions. Now the quality & character of Music is ~~necessarily the~~ an index and sure sign of the temperament & character of the people who enjoy it or produce it – And if you spread your observations wide enough the average quality of musical expression is explainable as the product & result of national predilections & ~~illeg~~ habits & ways of thought. And in temperament and average character I believe the English race has remained ~~on an average~~ the same for the last 500 years.

The foreign theory that we are an unmusical people.

The race a muscular & active one, not contemplative.

Nations do not excel in what they do not give their  
minds to.

Foreigners as a rule have settled among themselves that we are totally unmusical nation. That is I mean foreigners who have not come to England, or taken any particular means to find out whether it is so or no. ~~And~~ But I must confess that there are some considerable expanses in our history which have given them very good cause to come to that conclusion. The fact is we have been a very busy and adventurous people, & the best minds & best ~~men~~ dispositions have been drawn away too strongly into other lines of life to give their minds to Music. ~~And~~ While the very open-air kind of vigour & activity of the race has tended to make people think the Musician an inferior being, as he is rather a contemplative animal of necessity, & is obliged to spend a good deal of his time ~~not~~ the reverse of in the open air ~~by illeg~~ Indeed you cannot expect a nation to excel in things which they do not give their minds to. We have particularly given our minds to spreading the Anglo Saxon race over a large portion of the Globe, &

Colonizing & Organising.

There are reasons why we may have failed to show  
aptitude: not proofs of its non-existence

doing a vast quantity of remarkable organising of government and other kinds; & the habits of thought and life so generated here caused people to treat artistic music with insufficient respect: & indeed to dull the appetite for it. But it does not follow from that, that we are an unmusical nation, nor that in the end we may not be able to contribute ~~it~~ our quota to the ~~store of the~~ ~~it~~ store of permanent treasure of Musical art. Even foreigners are sometimes compelled to take a glance at an ancient English product; & to remark that they are puzzled to account for it. And this is essentially the case with ~~it~~ the first illustration to which I wish to call your attention. The famous tune "Summer is icumin in" is doubtless a somewhat hackneyed subject, but it is nonetheless one which I never cease to glory in. Firstly because it is one of the merriest healthiest, truest tunes the world is blest with, & secondly because the ingenious artistic devices by which

In early days our Musical status was unmistakable  
ahead of the rest of the world.

Backward state of Music in the 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

it is treated prove our musical development of the tune in which it was written to have been far ahead of that of the rest of the world. In order to ~~it~~ justify this last statement I must make a digression to explain what the general aspect of ~~things~~ things in the Musical world was at that time. The ~~MS-S~~ M.S. in which the tune is found is proved beyond doubt to belong to the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century – somewhere about from 1225 to 1240. Now at that time Music of our Modern order was in a very backward state. The ~~it~~ first stages of musical progress were made very slowly. And though men had begun to try harmonic effects some years earlier, by singing consecutive fifths and consecutive fourths in a row; ~~that~~ they had not – in the realms of scientific and artistic music – progressed as yet to anything much more attractive to our modern ~~minds~~ tastes. They had it is true come to the conclusion that there were other concords besides

Slow development of the perception of harmonic effect. Counterpoint at first very difficult.

Style of the pieces of the Parisian epoch very crude.



fifths and fourths, but they were chary in their use of them and found great difficulty in creating [continuing?] successful vocal pieces even for 3 voices. The ~~great~~ chief School of Music was in Paris, where was the great university of the world, to which students thronged in such crowds that it is said Philip Augustus had to enlarge the bounds of the city to admit them. And here flourished the most important composers of the early epoch; such as the great Organist [sic] Perotin, Leonin & Sabilla, & to this centre ~~journe~~ journeyed our ~~only~~ own composer & theorist Walter Odington the monk of Evesham. And here a man might become wise in all the learning of a musician about the time when our charming little song was [illeg]. Here were laboriously contrived a large number of the crudest & I am afraid the ugliest things perpetrated in the name of Music – and a large number of them are preserved in the MSS of the medical faculty of Montpellier. And marvellous

The compositions display more than anything else  
the difficulties the composers found in writing in  
parts.

Troubadors & Trouveres

works they are. Betraying the difficulties the composers found themselves in in every bar. Full of strange experiments, & strange successions of fifths and fourths. – Which when harmony was new to the world, & no one had heard better work ~~as yet~~ no doubt appealed to them very powerfully; & appeared to the worshippers who thronged to the ancient church of Notre Dame in Paris as marvels of musical achievement. More happy on the whole were the secular groups of poet-musicians, the Troubadors and Trouveres. Whose advances in vernacular poetry led them into a path where they soon found happy musical results; in the pretty graceful and expressive tunes to which they set their lyrics. The Trouveres especially gave their attention to harmonisation as well as to ~~melody~~ writing melody. And it is possibly in connection with the wide spread of their activity that our first popular tune[s?] came into existence.

Plenty of good intentions, & not a little charming  
melody

But none so wide in scope or so fresh & vigorous as  
our time

The neatness of the Canon

The Trouveres had many distinguished representatives in this country, & produced some admirable work in the form of great epical stories. ~~told in illeg~~ And whereon they produced their poetry there also Music went along with it. ~~illeg~~ The greatest warriors & statesmen were proved of their gifts in both lines [?] & these gifts were by no means to be despised ~~So that And~~. Indeed we may feel everywhere in the countries progressing in civilization at the time a ~~general illeg~~ wide spread and spontaneous appreciation of poetry and music, and a remarkable activity of production. But nowhere do we come across anything so neatly expressed or so happily contrived as our little tune 'Sumer is icumen in.' Apart from the charm of the tune itself, the points to be noticed are the [illeg] of the way in which it is treated and the clearly [?] contrived drone bass by which it is accompanied. The puzzle in the former case is to account for the fact that a tune which is so evidently a spontaneous popular song should have been contrived so as to fit into a Canon so neatly. It may be that this was more

Possibly an adaptation by a Musical monk, who may  
also have added the Latin words

Qualities of the time.

or less of a lucky accident. It is possible that ~~the~~ some monk who had studied Music seriously, & knew what contrivances were in vogue ~~who~~ observed that the tune would fit with a little management into such a form, & adapted it accordingly – adding at the same time some Latin words. The drone is a natural feature, & one which barbarous races very ~~ele~~ early learn the use of and we may ~~observed~~ observe that the inhabitants of Musical Wales had ~~decidedly~~ been well acquainted with it for some time as shown by the peculiarities of their national stringed instrument the Crwth. But at any rate the way in which it is developed in this case is an additional touch of ingenuity, as it is contrived on a sort of extra canon. The tune itself is of the freshest and most straightforward type; matching the words in its ~~illeg~~ ~~pastoral~~ the spirit in which it expresses our love of country life and the joys of ~~open-air~~ Summer. And in all these things it expresses genuinely English characteristics. The quality of the tune is unmistakable; but the ingenuity is not less

English taste for ingenuities in art.

Neither the troublous days of John & Henry iii

Nor the Chivalrous warfare of Edward iii were  
favourable to Music

But they were followed



characteristic of us. For it is often to be noted in less effective ~~of~~ eras of Musical art that some composers have been drawn to think more of ingenuity than of expression. This delightful tune does not stand entirely alone among English products of the time. But the period was succeeded by an unhappy one for this country, in which social circumstances were unfavourable to the progress of Art. And indeed they were not much better in other countries. ~~He~~ The reigns of John and Henry iii are not those which we regard as the most happy in our history. And it cannot be pretended that the great expeditions of Edward iii were favourable to the development of art either in this country or in France. For so much of the energies of the people were expended in killing one another. But as soon as these bellicose days of chivalry were over a fresh wave of intellectual energy burst forth. The general fermentation is shown by the appearance & popularity of Wicliffe, and the earnestness of the Lollards.

by a new outburst of intellectual energy –

Love of Music still maintained in Cloisters & among ecclesiastics; & works seem to have been sought for by Churchmen in various parts of Europe, which were drawn from any quarter where good music was thought to be made.

~~In literature~~ The early lights of English literature came forth in the persons of Langland and Chaucer and Gower, and in Music too England was soon well to the fore for a short while. Though ~~it is a time~~ things musical had come to somewhat of a standstill in the world for fully a century, ~~but~~ still Music was eagerly ~~sort~~ sought for. And if a composer made his appearance his works were soon diffused in MSS over Europe. From clear indications we find that the foremost composer ~~of~~ & Musician in Europe at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century was John Dunstable – who was apparently born in Bucks somewhere about 1380, and lived till 1453; in which year ~~he was buried~~ an epitaph ~~illeg~~ quoted by [illeg] records his burial in the old church of St Wallbrook. Till lately but little of his work was known. But the way in which he is referred to by ~~the most then~~ one of the leading foreign Theorists of the next generation [Illeg] as the “fons et origo” of the new ~~Outburst~~ era of Music, & the fact that ~~illeg~~ a work of his was known to be in the Vatican Library in Rome

## Diffusion of Dunstables works in Europe

Council of Trent assembled 1545 reassembled several times. Broken up 1552 by Maurice of Saxony. Probably met again later, as Rockstro says it was the Council which agreed to the reform of Church Music & it~~eg~~ sanctioned the employment of Palestrina it~~eg~~ which led to the composition of the Missa Papae Marcelli

His works of a different order of Art from ours

Draw attention to the similarity to a passage in Byrde's "Non Nobis." Also to the characteristic closes in it and in Rosabilla [?]

and also in a Library at Dijon in France, was enough to give the impression of the ~~it~~ diffusion of his fame. Quite lately ~~a large find~~ the discovery of a large collection of Music by him has been made in quite another quarter: namely in the Cathedral Library of the ancient town of Trent; on the borders of Austria and Italy: where once was held the famous Council. Most of these give a great impression of the ability of Dunstable. ~~One at least of his highly developed Musical sense. But that is too difficult for the present occasion.~~ [sic] The one I propose to present to you is rather a curiosity than a successful work of art. It must be regarded ~~rather as a specimen of Art of another calibre than~~ moreover as belonging to quite a different ~~order~~ order from of art from which we are accustomed to in these days. And quite different too, even to the works of the Elizabethan period. It represents the transition stage ~~to~~ between the earliest Parisian style (which is consistently characteristic with all its crudity) and the famous Netherland school which began with the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

Recurrence of fatal collapses after good starts, as  
characteristic of English Music

Another little piece of Dunstable is remarkable for a strange degree of unfamiliar expressiveness. At first it seems to moderns who try it merely strange, then as they get to know it better it gradually reveals itself as a piece of admirable & expressive voice writing in a style quite out of our ordinary musical experience – ~~but~~ and at the same time pure in sentiment & solid in construction. And ~~comparing~~ if we compare it with works by the famous Netherlanders of the next generation there is no doubt that Dunstable well deserved his reputation.

It is a strange feature ~~of~~ in history of English Music that ~~we have~~ its marked successes have never been followed up. England has been like a general who does not know how to make use of his victories. The Musical gift & artistic ~~it~~ ~~leg~~ indicated by the tune “Sumer is icumen in” was ~~checked~~ checked in the bud. So in later time was the hope inspired by the ~~appearance~~ genius of Purcell. And so after Dunstable's time also ~~Mus~~ Music seems to have totally collapsed ~~again~~. No school took up his line, or profited

## Wars of the Roses

Dufay [illeg] 1400-1474

papal choir 1437

[Illeg]

Music tutor to Charles the Bold

[Illeg] fellow choir boy at [Illeg]

d 1450 at Lille

Fugue 1415

Canon [?] 1420-1480 (circa)

Burrows [?] 1440-1482

(Charles the Bold & Mary of Burgundy).

Ockeghem [illeg] early 15<sup>th</sup> Cent in Flanders

in service of Charles VII & Louis XI of France

died about 1513

Josquin d about 1430 Papal choir 1471-1484

Louis XII d. 1521

Obrecht [?] [illeg] 1440

Master of [Illeg]

Antwerp d. in early years of 16<sup>th</sup> Century

Successive Schools of Music on the Continent before  
England woke again to make another effort.

Netherlanders

Italian school



by his achievement. Possibly the wars of the Roses, and the general disorganisation of ~~the Society and of the country~~ which attended on them made Musical progress impossible. At all events no indication of any sequel to Dunstables [sic] work is to be met with in English Music. He stands like an isolated beacon in an empty waste, ~~And Music~~ while his art was carried on & developed with the utmost ardour & success on the continent. First the Netherlands took up the ~~line~~ thread. Dufay and his friend Binchois at the head of the line – followed by Bunnos [?] and Okeghem. And they in turn by the famous Josquin de Prez, and Holbrecht – a noble air of genuine composers. ~~They~~ The Netherland musicians were sought after all over Europe, and in those days the highest in every land – ~~the~~ Emperors & Kings & men of mark of all kinds – delighted in the highest orders of art. The Netherlands found a great field in the Churches of Italy – especially in Venice & in Rome - & in due course the Italians learnt the art of composition from them. – And in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the great Italian school

## Culmination of the Italian School

Palestrina 1524

succeeded [illeg] at St Peters 1551

d 1594

[illeg] b about 1560 d 1599

“In a glorious garden green  
Saw I sitting a lovely queen  
Among the flowers that fresh bin  
She fathered [?] a flower & sat between  
he lilly white [illeg] methought I saw  
And ever she sang this day day [illeg]  
This day day [illeg]  
And I must home go.”

For 3 voices

I love I love & whom love you

I love another as well as you

[inserted lines illeg]

love a flower of sweet odour

line illeg]

lumbine gold of sweet flower

[illeg] let be its none of these

That liketh me

I love I love & cet

to agree in me

There is a flower wherever he be

Which should not yet be named for me

Crimson, violet & fresh daisy

Has past them all in his elegance

That best liketh mel love I love & cet

of choral composers began to bloom and bear fruit. Church music of the pure choral kind found its highest possible expression ~~before the end of the century in the before the end of the century pure Church form~~ in the work of Palestrina, while Marengis [?] was looked upon as the most successful of the secular composers in similar times. And before the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century the work of foreign nations in the line of Art was finished as it then reached its highest point. In the meanwhile in England after Dunstables time Musical things were in abeyance for some time. The view that social causes have great influence upon the development of Music is strongly justified by the fact that as soon as the firm hand of Henry vii was on the helm, Music began to thrive again. There are many indications of the interest taken in it; & many secular partsongs of the reign are preserved to us. – By men like Dr Fayrfax of Newark [?], Singer, Tavener, Sherpingham [?] Phydippus [?] & others. And crude as they are, ~~they~~ there gleams through their imperfections a distinctly English flavour. A directness

\*\*\* Quote the words of many of the things in Fayrfax about the  
gilliflower & cet

One that I love most entirely  
Gilliflower, [illeg] or Rosemary  
[Illeg] borage or savory  
Nay certainly here is not he that pleaseth me  
I love I love & cet  
I [illeg] a flower freshest of fame!  
What is his name that thou chose last  
The Rose I suppose – thou heart embrace [?]  
That same is he in heart so [illeg]  
That but liketh me  
The Rose it is a royal flower  
The red or white shows his colour  
Both be full sweet & of like [illeg]  
All one they be that day to see  
It liketh well me  
Now have I loved & when love ye (by Sir Thomas Philypps)

I love the Rose both red and white  
So that you [illeg] perfect appetite  
To hear talk of them is my delight  
Joyed may we be our Prince to see  
And adorn thee  
Now have we [illeg] & love will we  
This fair fresh flower full of beauty  
Most worthy it as thinketh me  
That may be [illeg] here [illeg]  
That we there be agreed [illeg]

Henry VIII

The Venetian Ambassador wrote of Prince Henry that “he spoke  
French English Latin & some Italian played well on the lute &  
virginals, sang from book at sight, & drew a bow with greater  
strength than any man in England.”

and simplicity of expression and again a taste for the poetry of country life, and for gardens & flowers. What taste for music there was in the country was encouraged by the reigning Tudors, who were distinctly evidently a family of Musical and artistic taste. Henry viii, with all his faults was distinctly a man of ability and of cultivated mind. ~~When he iteg~~ Even in his father's life time he was distinguished for his ~~ability~~ knowledge of foreign languages & general literature, as well as for his strength & manliness; but most of all for his Musical ability. He was ~~iteg~~ not only a man who really enjoyed what was good in Music, but also a practical Musician. He composed, and read well at sight; And his example was so good in that respect that it came ~~iteg~~ to be considered an important factor in the equipment of a properly educated gentleman that ~~it~~ he should be able to read at sight, and take a part with security in serious choral Music. We all

Henry viii. His good influence on Music

His position in relation to the reformation

know of Henry viii as a merry monarch; and one of his compositions is extraordinarily characteristic of what we are told of him. "Passetyme with good company," is just the sort of ~~poem song~~ sentiment we should have expected him to ~~write~~ express, & just the sort of burly [?] Music we should expect him to like to take a part in. It rings emphatically English too in its plain directness and simplicity; and if not highly expressive at all counts illustrative of a quality of the English character which is familiar. Henry's influence upon music in general was rendered all the more happy by the cautious way he ~~really~~ moved in the great question of the Reformation. For till the end of his days that movement ~~reformation illeg~~ was confined chiefly to reformation in the Church, rather than a sudden breaking away from it. And the happy result followed that the grand traditions of the old Ecclesiastical Music were carried on into the newly forming branches of ~~English~~ the English Protestant

Influence of the great tradition of the Roman Church  
Music had great influence upon the earliest our  
composers of the Reformation epoch



Church. And the early masters of that establishment were nearly all trained in the traditions of the old Choral Art; while some of the best of them such as Tallis and Byrde though writing for the new church and translating their Latin Motets into English Anthems maintained their connection with the Ancient Church to the end of their days. And such things had ~~great~~ important influence in the great ~~it~~g outburst of general Musical ability which marked the reign of Elisabeth. For in those days it was the only school to learn in; and it was the school in which the art of writing ~~for~~unaccompanied Choral Music was understood to perfection. Byrde was an important representative of both sacred & secular Choral Music; in the generations which followed him the ~~it~~g foremost composers made their mark chiefly in secular compositions, and many of them wrote nothing but Madrigals & cognate secular ~~it~~g kinds of Music. As has often been said, England

Sudden outburst of Musical & poetical energy in this  
country

Yonges Musical Transalpina

became suddenly a perfect nest of song birds. A few indications ~~illeg illeg~~ there had been previously of the growing taste for a refined secular Church Music in the shape of a few isolated compositions & publications, such as the well-known Madrigal “In going to my lonely bed,” & a collection published by Whythorn. (1571) John Day) [sic] But it is a curious fact that the year that decisively commenced the brilliant epoch of ~~of~~ our Madrigal school was the very year of the ever memorable defeat of the Spanish Armada. It was in 1588 that a singing man of St Pauls, Nicholas Yonge by name, published the first set of his *Musica Transalpina*; which contained a selection of the finest Madrigals by the great Italian Composers of the day, and one by our own composer Byrde. The taste of the time is most significantly set forth in the quaint preface to the work, in which he alludes to the ~~gre~~ growing delight people took in meeting together to sing Madrigals[.]

Ref Appearance of similar English publications  
followed in rapid succession

The proof on the justness of his observation is in the rapidity of publication of similar works by Englishmen which immediately followed & continued even into the the depressing reign of Charles I. Byrde was first in the field in ~~1599~~ 1589 and 1590. In 1593, 1594 and 1595 Thomas Morley brought out Canzonets Madrigals and Ballets. In 1597 Thomas Weelkes produced a set of Madrigals and Dowland a set of his exquisite “songs or Aires of 4 parts.” In 1598 Wilbye produced a superb set of Madrigals. In 1599 an admirable set came out by John Benet. In 1601 came out that famous collection made in honour of Elizabeth called “The Triumphs of Oriana,” which contains some of the finest Madrigals in existence & in 1604 a fine set by Bateson - & so it goes on, ~~illeg~~ sometimes with many admirable publications in one year, to the Madrigals of our great composer Orlando Gibbons in 1612, and the publications of Pilkington in 1624 & Hilton clever Falas in 1627 – Which was the very

John Wilbye

year of one of Charles first disasters – the failure of Buckingham at Rochelle. It is indeed a marvellous outburst, for it was the object of most of these composers to produce real works of art, & most of them really ~~succeeded~~ succeeded. Their object was not to make it pay, not to win notoriety. This work came out of the fulness of their hearts, and no branch of English Musical art has ever approached it for genuine sincerity thoroughness, & ~~its~~ consistently National character. The man of them all who had the greatest command of this special branch of art – of expression, of ~~form~~ a large scope of design or form, and genuinely beautiful vocal expression was John Wilbye. His famous “Sweet honey sucking bees” is ~~the~~ at once the most conspicuous example of clear bright true English style, & of large & ~~bett~~ well planned form; ~~& of~~ and it contains in its last two pages some of the most

Wilbye

Dowlands partsongs



delicately tender pieces of voice writing that exist. Not far behind it are “Stay Corydon” & “Lady when I behold.” The one which acks his characteristics most closely into a comparative nutshell is the merry bantering Madrigal “Thus saith my Chloris bright” – which ~~sparkled~~ sparkles with Musical wit & has all the freshness of a bubbling spring. The tone is more robust & vigorous than sentimental, & it is ~~into~~ under such conditions that our English nature seems to succeed best. But And in every point it is thorough & free from cheap ~~dodge~~ devices and scamping. That we ~~it~~ may take as a most characteristic example of English Madrigal. But the movement brought out other forms besides the pure Madrigal; And amongst these ~~the~~ one of the most important was that form of polyphonic partsong which was almost the exclusive ~~property of~~ invention and property of John Dowland. The characteristics of his work

Dowland

He was lutenist to Christian 14 of Denmark  
d. 1626

are partly accounted for by his being at once a great traveller and a great lute player. As a traveller he was brought into contact with changing conditions of Art in other countries. For in Italy he must have come across the first premonitions of the new art of solo singing and the new first experiments in the direction of Opera & Oratorio. While as a lute player he was brought into contact with the problems of melody & accompaniment - & assuredly he learnt to regard Melody from a different point of view from that of his fellow composers. The results were found in his ~~ex~~ exquisite little dainty partsongs - Which have the beauty of melody ~~of the~~ of a kind as direct as that of any modern, while the management of the lower voices has always the interest & point and independence of the true polyphonist. It is in its slender way a very wonderful compound - & again the sentiment (& it is sentiment here) is of the best &

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purest English kind.

Lastly I come to the peculiarly English development of what were called Balletti in Italy. This form of art is primarily ~~simply~~ nothing more than a merry dance tune sung by voices in parts, & ~~this~~ such kinds of Music came into use in France & Italy tolerably early. Morleys development of them is a remarkable performance. He was a man of comprehensive gifts. A scientific theorist, a first rate Musician, a man of genuine good feeling & a ~~man~~ lover of wit & ~~merriment~~ merriment. He succeeded in most of the things he tried his hand at; but most in his ballets. In which he adopted the merry rhythms of the genuine ballet, but imposed his form with all the skill and Art of a Madrigalist of the first Order. ~~Off~~ Of his many brilliant and merry & witty pieces a few stand out conspicuous for scope & wit. Perhaps none more than "Fire fire." In which mocking merriment, and vigorous rhythms are mingled with all the skill of a first rate master of expression ~~illeg illeg first~~ and of the most perfect voice writing – whether ~~from the point~~ looked at in view of independence, or of the combined effect of sound. And here as in all the other works I have called your attention to, rings out a genuine English spirit and an English style: A style at once masculine

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vigorous, healthy and straightforward. Of decorative flummery and of hazy mysticism there is next to none; & luckily the sentiment never degenerates into sentimentality. And it is to be noticed that the composer always aims at what is artistically first rate. If he is merry he is still thorough, and even his mockery has too much skill in the expression to be purely frivolous. We are not a profoundly passionate race, or if we are we keep our hand upon the safety valve but that does not preclude us from having deep feeling. Our great poets have dealt with all the noblest & deepest emotions the race is capable of; and they succeed best when ~~their~~ the things they deal with are worthy of the highest treatment. The great English Madrigal school arrived at its astonishing pitch of perfection because the composers spoke ~~illeg~~ out of a true heart, & neither ~~app~~ aped the passion & seriousness of ~~one illeg~~ of one foreign nation ~~art~~ nor the effective triviality of another, not the profundity of ~~illeg~~ another; but spoke what was English without shame or apology. They did not condescend to write down to the vulgar public, ~~not to advertise illeg illeg~~ and personal notoriety they seem not ever to have dreamed of but they aimed at the highest things in expression & art

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Music was capable of. Englishmen are not naturally gifted with the sense of effect of some foreign nations. To play with levity & prettiness is what they will never succeed in. Where we have succeeded best is when we have made up our minds to scale the heights of Art & literature. The great Madrigalists were the contemporaries of Shakespeare & Spenser Ben Jonson, Bacon ~~illeg~~, Drake, Frobisher, Raleigh & even Milton; & they were not unworthy of the fellowship. English music ~~might~~ may yet rise to the highest levels if her Musicians ~~would only~~ will make up their minds, that in despite of the length of the road and the hardness of the climb, those highest levels ~~were~~ the things which were most worth aiming at; and to win them repaid a man far more truly than to welter in luxury, or to sun himself in the blaze of a cheap popularity.

One of the deadliest moments for art is when artists begin to comfort themselves with the reflection that the public to whom they appeal cannot distinguish imperfections of workmanship.

Strabo says

“In victory unstoppable[?]

In defeat contemptible

Such choice does not require [illeg]. But it may need an explanation

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